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ABOUT US

The Louisiana Environmental Public Health Tracking Program (LEPHT) is a cooperative initiative between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Department of Health and Hospitals' (DHH) Office of Public Health, Section of Environmental Epidemiology and Toxicology and Office of Management and Finance, Section of Information Technology. LEPHT plans to provide information to environmental and public health professionals, legislators, advocacy groups, researchers and the public to facilitate better decision making, evaluation and policy development.

MISSION

Our mission is to develop a secure electronic network for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of environmental public health data and information; to guide policy, practice and other actions toward improving the health of Louisiana residents; and to foster collaboration among the state's environmental and public health partners.

VISION

Our vision is for Louisiana to be a state where high-quality information on environmental health is available to all in a rapid, simple form in order to support an environment of wellness consisting of an abundance of clean air, clean water, and healthy buildings.



Bienvenue: Welcome to the LEPHT Bulletin

Welcome to the Bayou Bulletin, a newsletter from the Louisiana Environmental Public Health Tracking (LEPHT) Program. LEPHT is a five-year program that is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Environmental Public Health Tracking Program (EPHT).

The goal of the LEPHT is to develop a standardized web-based surveillance network for collecting and analyzing health and environmental data. This EPHT Network (EPHTN) will address questions regarding how environmental contaminants affect people's health.

The CDC's EPHT Network is the first environmental health tool to make nationally-consistent, standardized environmental and health data and measures available. CDC launched its EPHT network in the summer of 2009.

Important updates made to the CDC's Tracking Network this year include addition of the following data sets:

Reproductive health & birth outcomes

- Prematurity among singleton births
- Growth retardation - singleton births
- Sex ratio

Air

- Modeled air data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Cancer

- Ten types of cancer including: Acute lymphocytic leukemia in children; Acute myeloid leukemia; Acute myeloid leukemia in children; Breast cancer; Chronic lymphocytic leukemia

Birth defects

- Twelve different birth defects, including: Spina bifida, Gastroschisis, Down syndrome

Carbon monoxide poisoning

- Mortality data for all 50 states

Linkage of Air Quality and Asthma Hospitalizations

DHH partnered with Tulane's Center for Applied Environmental Public Health to evaluate procedures they developed for linking asthma and air quality data. LDHH staff computed measures of association at the state and parish levels. For more information about this project, contact Liz Langlois at langlois@tulane.edu.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Frequently Asked Questions

What data will be available?

Data on LEPHT will include asthma and myocardial infarction hospitalizations, cancer, births, birth defects, vital statistics, childhood blood lead levels, ozone and particulate matter in ambient air, arsenic, disinfection by-products, nitrates and nitrites in public drinking water.

How will LEPHT data be displayed?

LEPHT will feature analysis, visualization and reporting tools that allow users to create maps, graphs and charts of selected data. Users will be able to view multiple displays of data side-by-side, drill down levels of data, and export data in usable formats such as Excel. Public users will have the ability to select from a predetermined set of indicator measures while authorized users will have the ability to perform ad-hoc queries. Data will be presented with information on the data source and its limitations.

Will personally identifiable data be protected?

Data provided to the public by LEPHT will be appropriately de-identified and aggregated and will conform to strict confidentiality and suppression rules as determined by the CDC and the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. Secure data will be accessible only to authorized users via a pin/password login.

Upcoming Events

2011 Meetings

February 11-12: Louisiana Environmental Education Symposium, Baton Rouge Marriott Hotel

March 27-29: Xavier University of Louisiana, College of Pharmacy's Health Disparities Conference, Sheraton New Orleans Hotel

Visit <http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/events.asp> to learn about other event health related events throughout the state.

REMINDER TO SAVE THE DATE!

April 25-28, 2011

Environmental Public Health Tracking Workshop
New York City

The purpose of this meeting is to provide training, face to face meetings for workgroups, next step discussions and sessions on the future of the National and State networks. To register for this event got to:

<http://www.certain.com/system/profil/web/index.cfm?PKWebId=0x28860913e5>



Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

A surveillance system was developed to track acute health complaints related to the oil spill.

Data are obtained from hospitals, clinics, and calls to LDHH and the Louisiana Poison Control Center. The program also monitors seafood, air, sediment and water data from the EPA.

Weekly reports are available on DHH's website: <http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/reports.asp?ID=378&Detail=791>

If you are interested in obtaining additional information regarding DHH's oil spill response, please contact Emán Williams at 1-888-293-7020 or ewillia5@la.gov.

Partner Activities & Announcements



LA Occupational Health & Injury Surveillance Program (LOCHIS)

In 2010, LOCHIS Program, which is housed within SEET, received 5 years of funding from CDC's National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health for program expansion. LOCHIS received an initial award from CDC in 2003 to develop a state program for surveillance of occupational injuries, diseases and exposures. The goal of the program is to

analyze key occupational health indicators and develop interventions that will reduce occupational injuries and diseases. Program staff assess data from multiple sources (e.g., Cancer, Hospitalizations, Mortality, Poison Control, Lab Data (Adult Blood Lead), and Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. To obtain additional info about the program, contact Michelle Lackovic at Michelle.Lackovic@la.gov.

Tracking Network Tutorials Now Available!

Interested in learning more about how to use CDC's National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network? Learn more about navigating Tracking Network data, running queries and much more at <http://ephtracking.cdc.gov/training>:

1. Navigating the Tracking Network.
2. Finding specific information
3. Accessing data
4. Running queries and evaluating results

EPHT 101 Now Available

CDC, in cooperation with **National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)**, is pleased to offer Environmental Public Health Tracking 101.

EPHT 101 is a free course that provides an introduction and overview of the major components of environmental public health

tracking in 12 interactive modules. The course is available online on an ongoing basis and may be taken in all or in part at any time by anyone.

[Click here to access EPHT 101.](#)

You will receive a login and password via e-mail. EPHT 101 is a CDC sponsored workshop.

LEPHT Milestones Achieved

A few important milestones have been achieved this year in the planning of the LEPHT Network:

- A collaborative workspace has been developed within SharePoint to enable internal sharing and reporting;
- A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) has been established;
- Documents which outline Data Investigation, Collection and Evaluation (DICE); a Technical Network Implementation Plan (TNIP); and Risk Communication Plan have been drafted;
- Data for asthma, myocardial infarction hospitalizations were procured, processed into nationally consistent data and measures (NCDMs), and submitted to the CDC for import into the national EPHT portal;
- Data Sharing Agreements (DSAs) are being drafted with each data partners which will outline the criteria for using, sharing and re-releasing data.
- An updated LEPHT Web site was launched [LEPHT Web site](#); and
- Staff from various state agencies are assisting us in getting source data for cancer, drinking water, outdoor air and reproductive health outcomes.

LEPHT Future Milestones Planned

December 31, 2010

- All available core data will be obtained from data partners.

February 28, 2011

- A secure data warehouse will be completed and populated with processed core data.
- This date also marks the end of LA's planning and capacity building, and commencement of network implementation.

June, 2011

- LEPHTN implementation activities commence.

August 31, 2012

- The state's web-based portal and secure and public tracking portal will be deployed.

May, 2012

- All available core NCDMs will be sent to the CDC's EPHT. Program

Frequently Asked Questions

How can the data be used?

Data provided on the LEPHT Network can be accessible to researchers, public health and environmental practitioners, policy makers, and the public. Data can be used by local and state health departments, physicians and other public health officials to analyze trends over time, identify high-risk groups, target effective public health and environmental interventions, and advance public health research. The LEPHTN will help agencies and others perform key functions, including monitoring and distributing information about environmental hazards and disease trends; advancing research on possible linkages between environmental hazards and disease; and developing, implementing, and evaluating regulatory and public health actions to control environmentally-related diseases. Information from LEPHTN can also be used by policymakers to guide public health legislation and help the public understand indicators of environmental public health in their communities.

Program Staff:

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EPHT Workgroups

CDC's EPHT Program has established several workgroups to assist the agency in implementing the national program.

The groups that have been developed include: Program Marketing and Outreach (PMO); Standards and Network and Development (SND); and various Content Workgroups (CWG).

All of the workgroups are comprised of local, state and national partner organizations.

Staff from EPHT data partners are especially encouraged to participate in CWG calls.

The mission of the CWG calls is to:

- 1) Develop guidelines to facilitate data collection, processing, evaluation and use;

- 2) Identify and evaluate data sets and sources; and
- 3) Develop methods for deriving NCDMs.

Workgroup teams include: Cancer, Air Quality, Birth Defects, Drinking Water Quality, Climate Change, Childhood Lead, Hospitalizations, Pesticides, and Metadata.

A Geospatial Workgroup was recently added which will evaluate issues related to geocoding and the spatial presentation of data.

Please call Emán Williams at 1-888-293-7020 to be added to content workgroup calls and/ or to obtain CWG updates.

Upcoming EPHT Workgroup Calls

- ***Hospitalizations*** Jan 13 (1pm)
- ***Air Quality*** Jan 18 (2pm)
- ***Water Quality*** Dec 21 (2 pm)
- ***Metadata*** Nov 17 (11 am)
- ***Cancer*** Dec 27 (2 pm)
- ***Climate Change*** Dec 23 (noon)
- ***Birth Defects*** Dec 23 (1 pm)
- ***SND*** Jan 6 (noon)
- ***Childhood Lead*** Jan 10 (1 pm)